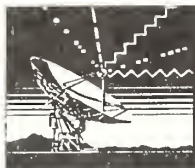


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

June 9, 1995

Letter No. 2717

AN INCREASE IN PORK ASSESSMENTS -- To keep up with inflation, the Department of Agriculture is increasing the assessment rate for hogs and pork by one tenth of a percent, raising it from .35 percent to .45 percent. Domestic and imported hogs, pork and pork products will be affected beginning September 3, 1995. Importer assessments will also be adjusted and the combination of the two rates will mean an additional \$10-\$12 million each year to the National Pork Research and Promotion Program's \$40 million budget. Assessments are levied when live hogs are sold and on imported pork and pork products. This is only the second increase in the assessment rate since it was established in 1986. **Contact: Gil High (202) 720-8998.**

NO EXTENSIONS FOR COTTON LOANS -- Upland cotton loans maturing June 30 will not be extended beyond that date. Based on the requirements of the amended Agricultural Act of 1949, loan extensions won't be available on outstanding Commodity Credit Corporation nonrecourse upland cotton price support loans maturing on June 30, 1995. These 10-month loans can be extended for eight months, but not when the average price for upland cotton for the preceding month exceeds 130 percent of the average spot price for the preceding 36 months. The May, 1995 average spot market price was 105.38 cents per pound, 160 percent of the May, 1992 through April, 1995 average price. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

USDA WANTS INPUT INTO SHEEP AND WOOL ORDER -- Should the U.S. Department of Agriculture establish a sheep and wool promotion, research, education and information program? That's the question USDA officials are asking, and they would like your response. The program is authorized by the Sheep Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1994 and would include a 120 member board of producers, feeders and importers. Funding for the program would come from a mandatory assessment on domestic sheep producers, feeders and exporters. The rate would be one cent per pound on live sheep sold and 2 cents per pound on greasy wool sold. Importers would pay one cent per pound on live sheep and sheep products and two cents per pound on degreased wool and wool products. Imported raw wool would be exempt from the assessments. To comment on the proposal, send your comments by July 17 to USDA's AMS, Room 2624-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. **Contact: Becky Unkenholz (202) 720-8998.**

SPECIAL EGG INSPECTION TRANSFERRED -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) began inspecting plants producing liquid, frozen and dried egg products at 81 plants around the country. The duties were transferred from USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to FSIS. These new duties will add to FSIS's overall responsibility of inspecting all meat and poultry sold in retail commerce. Almost 160 inspectors, supervisors and staff transferred from AMS to FSIS to make the transition as smooth as possible. **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

RULES FOR NEWLY FORMED DIVISION -- The newly formed National Appeals Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is establishing its operating rules. Created as part of the reorganization of USDA, this division consolidates several agency appeals units into one independent organization reporting directly to the Secretary of Agriculture. Proposed appeals procedures would apply to adverse decisions relating to denial of participation in USDA programs, compliance with program requirements, payments to participants and the amount of benefits to participants. The National Appeals Division will hear appeals of adverse decisions by the Consolidated Farm Service Agency, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service, the Rural Housing and Community Development Service and any other agencies so designated by the Secretary of Agriculture. A copy of the proposed regulations is published in the May 22 Federal Register. **Contact: Martha Cashion (202) 720-3310.**

BIOTECHNOLOGY PERMITS ON INTERNET -- To provide the public with fast, easy access to timely data about permit applications and the issuance of biotechnology permits, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will list this information on Internet. Information concerning receipt of permit applications and the issuance of permits by USDA's Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for environmental releases of some genetically engineered organisms is now available on the Internet. The Internet address for APHIS biotechnology permits on the World Wide Web is <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/BBEP/BP/>. If you need help accessing the APHIS Biotechnology Permits Home Page, call Arnold Foudin at (301) 734-7612. Foudin can also provide information about environmental releases conducted under permit in hard copy form. **Contact: Cynthia A. Eck (301) 734-5931.**

WHO SHOULD BE ON THE COMMITTEE? -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is looking for nominations to fill appointments to the newly formed Fresh Products Shipping Inspection Program Advisory Committee. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service administers the Fresh Products Shipping Point Inspection Program, which the committee will review in terms of its administration, operations and funding. USDA is seeking nominees from all sectors of the fruit and vegetable industry, including growers, shippers, receivers and processors. Send nominations by June 19 to USDA's AMS, Fresh Products Branch, P.O. Box 96456, Room 2056-S, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. **Contact: Becky Unkenholz (202) 720-8998.**

FIRST USDA GRADUATE FELLOWS -- The first participants in the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Woodrow Wilson Foundation graduate fellowship program were selected. Eight students from 1890's land-grant institutions were chosen for the fellowship based on superior academic achievements, leadership qualities, strong character and their involvement in community and university activities. Established in February, the fellowship program is based on a partnership with the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, a non-profit educational foundation designed to assist American students in achieving their higher education goals and the 1890 institutions. This helps graduates prepare for careers at USDA and affords USDA/1890 scholars the opportunity to earn advanced degrees in the areas important to the mission of USDA. For every year of the fellowship, the students agree to one year of service to USDA. For more information about the graduate fellowship program or the selected participants, contact Richard LaPointe at (202) 720-2611. **Contact: Martha Cashion (202) 720-3310.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1983 -- How we track the weather has changed a lot since recently retired USDA Meteorologist Norton Strommen began forecasting. In this edition of Agriculture USA, Brenda Curtis talks with Dr. Strommen about the changes he has seen. **(Weekly 5:00 documentary feature).**

CONSUMER TIME #1458 -- Good news for all -- soaring farm exports. Tracking the weather through the years. New study on alcohol and weight gain. How to properly care for azaleas. Azalea insect and disease problems. **(Weekly consumer features).**

AGRITAPE FEATURES #1970 -- A friendly fungus helps corn and soybean farmers battle a costly crop disease. Making conservation compliance farmer friendly. Rains are fostering farmer frustration. A program to promote sheep and wool? The beef hormone issue heats up. **(Weekly agriculture features).**

UPCOMING ON USDA'S RADIO NEWSLINE -- Monday, June 12, world agricultural supply and demand; cotton and wool outlook. Tuesday, June 13, feed update; oil crops outlook; rice outlook; wheat outlook; world markets and trade for grains and oilseeds; weekly weather and crops. Thursday, June 15, milk production. Friday, June 16, cattle on feed. Tuesday, June 20, weekly weather and crops; agricultural outlook; agricultural income and finance. Thursday, June 22, catfish processing. Friday, June 23, livestock, dairy and poultry outlook; U.S. agricultural trade update; livestock slaughter. **These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carry many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or (202) 720-8359

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on USDA's participation in the National Home Ownership Strategy.

ACTUALITIES -- Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas on Forest Service Re-invention.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

Thursday, 3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, Telstar 302, C-band, Channel 6 (Transponder 3H), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3820 MHz. Monday, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET, Galaxy 4, Channel 12 (C-band), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3940 MHz.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry A. Quinn at (202)720-6072 or 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

INDIANA FARM TOUR...drew broadcasters like **Lew Middleton** (WIBC, Indianapolis, IN), **Skip Davis** (WASK/WKOA, Lafayette, IN), **Ron Powers** (WOWO, Ft. Wayne, IN) and **Darrin Johnston** (AgriAmerica Network, Indianapolis, IN) for a media preview day this week. One of the most interesting of five northwest Indiana farms visited was Rose Acre Farm which boasts 1.2 million laying hens. Lew says they observed egg gathering, processing, grading and toured an egg cracking facility where liquid products are prepared. Southern Indiana farmers are still struggling to get corn and soybeans planted which is 18 days behind average planting time.

ALL WET...still describes conditions in Missouri, reports **Jim Coyle** (KRES, Moberly, MO). Northern third of the state still has virtually nothing planted. Jim has done 25 on-farm interviews in 17 counties since mid-May as part of his "Farmer Appreciation Days" series which continues through mid-June. He says in all his travels he's not seen a single tractor moving in the fields, except mowing lawns by the homesteads. This flood of '95 is being declared by some locally as worse than the flood of '93 in economic impact. Crops were planted in '93, but nothing much was planted in '95. Jim's on-farm interviews have covered everything from livestock, crops, emus, mules, and even a "worm farm."

HURRICANE ALLISON...dumped 4-5 inches of rain in **Everett Griner's** (Southeast Ag Net, Moultrie, GA) area. Cotton about 10-12 inches high needed the rain, but wind knocked over cornstalks in many fields. Farmers won't be getting in the fields anytime soon.

FATHER/SON TEAM...covers agriculture for Texas State Network (TSN). **Jim Stewart** (KFYO, Lubbock, TX) connects long distance with his son, **Blair Stewart** (TSN, Arlington, TX) for daily statewide broadcasts from 5:30-6 a.m. Jim continues with Ag Producers Radio Network reports from 6-6:30 a.m. and has an hour-long noon program. On the southern Texas plains, weather effects have limited dryland cotton planting to 15% completion (45% of cotton acreage is non-irrigated there). With cotton demand high, many planting attempts will be made in the next 8-10 days. After that, alternatives of soybeans, grain sorghum and sunflowers will be considered.

Larry A. Quinn
LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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